

Smaller e-bikes are easier to store. The magic fold of the Brompton means any electric version – Brompton's own or kit conversions – can be folded and taken into most offices, restaurants and so on for ultimate security.

Even if you decide against an e-folder, there are many reasonably light, compact models around that are much easier to lift up steps, take in lifts and store inside your house or flat compared to bigger, heavier models.

Don't assume that cargo e-bikes can't be stored inside even if you have limited storage space. There are compact longtail e-cargo designs with drop-down handlebars and folding pedals. Tern's HSD and GSD models can even be stored vertically by balancing them on the rear of the pannier rack.

E-BIKES AND WATER

All e-bikes should be designed to be ridden in rain but care should be taken not to immerse any of the electrical components – especially the battery and control electronics – in running water. Riding through deep fords, for example, should be avoided if possible. Pressure washing should also be avoided as this may penetrate the seals and enclosures of the e-bike.

It's a reasonable precaution to shelter with your e-bike in torrential rain, or if that's not possible to ride at lower speeds so water doesn't get forced through seals. Individual components may be IP65-rated (and thus designed to resist low pressure water jets, as well as being dust tight) but the whole system may not be.

You should, of course, aim to keep the e-bike dry when it's parked. If it has to be stored outside, a good rain cover is the bare minimum protection. A dry shed or bike bunker is preferable.

Sea water and other salt water poses particular problems for any electrical equipment. Contact with e-bikes should be avoided at all costs. Due to its saltiness, seawater it is a very good conductor of electricity, making electrical shorts more likely. Sea water will start to severely corrode metal surfaces it comes into contact with, electrically conductive or otherwise.

In addition, beach riding will mean sand will get into many components and will, at the very least, cause extra wear and tear.



Above: Good-quality e-bikes will be sealed against water ingress from rain or splashes, but you should avoid pressure washers or immersion

Left: E-bikes can be booked on trains like other bikes, although vertical hooks are awkward with a heavier bike

a cover as it then becomes hand luggage. Electric Bromptons (brompton.com) and the FLIT (flit.bike) are two ultra-portable e-folders. For larger and non-folding bikes, local train services usually have 'roll on, roll off' space available outside of peak hours (when there may be restrictions). Intercity services often require you to book, and they frequently employ hooks for storage, which can be awkward to hang an e-bike on.

I'm not aware of any train operating companies currently prohibiting e-bikes, although e-scooters, e-hoverboards and similar are banned. There have been occasional instances of individual e-bikes being refused carriage on trains but these were rather amateurish-looking kit conversions with copious gaffer tape and cable ties.

For coach and bus travel, the best option is, again, a compact folder with a cover. (Try to cover your bike before the driver sees it if possible!) It is then classed as regular hand luggage.

Airlines will generally only accept e-bike batteries up to 100Wh on flights. Most are much bigger than this, but the Cytronex conversion kit is notable as it features a 198Wh battery that is in fact two independent battery packs. It can be transported by air because it is classed as two batteries of up to 100Wh, installed in equipment. If permitted, e-bike

batteries are usually only allowed in the cabin with the passenger, not in the luggage hold. Do check detailed rules with your operator before your flight.

What about shipping your e-bike? Clearly this is possible ▶

TRANSPORTING YOUR E-BIKE

The best solution for cars is a rack with a sufficiently high weight limit. For heavier e-bikes that you can't lift onto the roof, there is a good choice of tow-ball-mounted options. Some of these even enable you to wheel the bike on rather than lift it on, and there are models that will carry two and even three e-bikes.

The easiest option for train travel is to get a smaller, folding e-bike with



Tern Quick Haul: an easy-to-store e-cargo bike